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THE ROUND TABLE

WHAT SOME MIDDLE-WEST WOMEN LIKE TO READ

In an effort on the part of the Committee on Economy of Time to find out whether the reading required and recommended in the schools is meeting the taste of the majority, a number of women in the Middle West were interviewed last year. Those whom the committee representative asked which books they liked best and which they would most strongly recommend to young people were chiefly housekeepers and business women. No school teachers were approached. The education of the women varied from a grammar-school training to graduate study, but most of them were high-school graduates.

The lists of books offered by about seventy-five women include three hundred titles. Of these I shall give only those mentioned two or more times. Those recommended five times are put first in a short list arranged according to popularity. The others are alphabetized. The figures following the titles represent the number of times the books were recommended.

<i>Les Misérables</i>	25	<i>Daddy Long-Legs</i>	6
<i>Freckles</i>	15	<i>Girl of the Limberlost</i>	6
The Bible	14	<i>Lady of the Lake</i>	6
<i>Pollyanna</i>	11	<i>Red Pepper Burns</i>	6
<i>Over the Top</i>	10	<i>Anne of Green Gables</i>	5
<i>David Copperfield</i>	9	<i>Ben Hur</i>	5
Shakespeare	9	Dickens' works	5
<i>Little Women</i>	8	<i>Five Little Peppers</i>	5
<i>The Crisis</i>	7	<i>Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come</i>	5
<i>Ivanhoe</i>	7	<i>Mrs. Wiggs</i>	5
<i>Tale of Two Cities</i>	7	<i>Tom Sawyer</i>	5
Louisa Alcott's stories	6		
<i>Adam Bede</i>	2	<i>Carry On</i>	3
<i>The Birds' Christmas Carol</i>	2	<i>The Choir Invisible</i>	3
<i>Black Beauty</i>	2	<i>The Clansman</i>	2
Browning's works	2	<i>The Doctor</i>	2
<i>The Calling of Dan Matthews</i>	3	<i>Efficient Living</i>	2
<i>Captains Courageous</i>	2	Emerson's essays	4
<i>The Cardinal</i>	4	<i>The Garden of Allah</i>	3

<i>Great Expectations</i>	2	<i>Mother</i>	2
<i>Grimm's Fairy Tales</i>	3	<i>Mr. Brilling Sees It Through</i>	4
<i>Hans Brinker</i>	2	<i>My Home in the Field of Honor</i>	2
<i>The Iron Woman</i>	3	<i>Queed</i>	2
<i>Jane Eyre</i>	3	<i>Quincy Adams Sawyer</i>	2
<i>John Halifax</i>	2	<i>Quo Vadis</i>	2
<i>Joseph Vance</i>	2	" <i>Rabbi Ben Ezra</i> "	2
<i>K</i>	2	<i>Ramona</i>	2
<i>Laddie</i>	3	<i>Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm</i>	4
<i>The Lady of the Decoration</i>	2	<i>Riley's poems</i>	3
<i>The Lamplighter</i>	3	<i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	2
<i>Letters of a Selfmade Merchant to</i> <i>His Son</i>	2	<i>Romola</i>	2
<i>Little Men</i>	4	<i>The Rosary</i>	2
<i>Mary Carey</i>	2	<i>Sara Crewe</i>	2
<i>Michael O'Halloran</i>	2	<i>Scott's novels</i>	4
<i>An Old-Fashioned Girl</i>	2	<i>The Shepherd of the Hills</i>	3
<i>Oliver Twist</i>	4	<i>A Student in Arms</i>	3
<i>Paradise Lost</i>	2	<i>Tennyson's poems</i>	2
<i>Peter Ibbetson</i>	2	<i>That Printer of Udell's</i>	2
<i>Pollyanna Grows Up</i>	4	<i>Thelma</i>	2
<i>Gene Stratton-Porter's books</i>	2	<i>Trilby</i>	4
<i>The Prince and the Pauper</i>	2	<i>The Turmoil</i>	4
<i>Private Peat</i>	3	<i>Up from Slavery</i>	2
<i>The Promised Land</i>	3	<i>When a Man's a Man</i>	3
<i>Proverbs</i>	2	<i>White Fang</i>	2
<i>Mildew Manse</i>	2	<i>Harold Bell Wright's books</i>	3

Some of the individual lists were so surprising that I should like to quote several of them.

I

Louisa Alcott's books, *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, *Five Little Peppers*, Shakespeare, Harold Bell Wright's books, *David Copperfield*, *Les Misérables*, *Freckles*, *The Lady of the Lake*, *Knights of the Round Table*.

II

Queed, *Harriet's Choice*, *The First Violin*, *A Certain Rich Man*, *That Printer of Udell's*, the Bible, Stoddard's books of travel, *Life of Lincoln*, Stanley's *Travels*, *Hepsey Burke*, *Lovey Mary*, *Gibbie Gault*, *Five Little Peppers*, George Eliot's books.

III

Freckles, *K*, *The Harvester*, *The Turmoil*, *Red Pepper Burns*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Mildew Manse*, *Les Misérables*.

It is probable that the twenty-five people who recommended *Les Misérables* had all read it as required reading in the high school. The lists at first sight may seem profoundly discouraging because so little discrimination is evident, but on second thought is it not encouraging to discover that the same people who enjoy the works of Harold Bell Wright and Gene Stratton-Porter can and do appreciate *Knights of the Round Table*, *Les Misérables*, and the Bible?

Whether or not this is an essentially feminine list is an interesting question. Would the men of the same families from which these women came recommend the same books?

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THE LIBRARY HOUR IN THE NORMAL SCHOOL

The library hour is the special opportunity of the teacher of literature to introduce her class to the library as a workshop which may well be considered the laboratory of the English department. In a normal school it may be used, not only for the working out of projects by the students themselves, but for the observation and teaching of classes from the training school. At Bridgewater Normal School the library is used in this way. The aim has been to establish the habit of going to the library as a source of help and to give students sufficient library instruction to enable them to inculcate such a habit in children. The library has proved to be an excellent classroom. The following will illustrate the types of lessons conducted there.

The children of the Bridgewater Training School, from the junior high school and as far down as the fourth grade, were instructed in the use of the library—how to treat a book, how to use encyclopedias, the unabridged dictionary, vertical file, reader's guide, and card catalogue. The Normal students also learned the use of these "tools," and how to care for, classify, and catalogue books. (They are helping to organize the library at Bridgewater so as to become familiar with details of that department.)

One day in the fall, when corn was being used extensively in place of wheat, and after some of the children had had the experience of helping the farmers get in their crops, Whittier's "Corn-Song" was presented to the seventh grade. On one bulletin board were pictures which helped the children to feel the sentiment of the poem. These pictures, cut from magazines and illustrated papers, showed the farmers with the corn, farmer girls at work in the kitchen, and other scenes which the poem